

Date of Hearing: July 5, 2023

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Laura Friedman, Chair

ACR 98 (Lackey) – As Introduced June 19, 2023

SUBJECT: California Highway Patrol (CHP) Officer Andy Ornelas Memorial Highway

SUMMARY: Designates the portion of State Route 14 from the Avenue 0-8 bridge at Postmile R62.151 to the Avenue M overcrossing at Postmile R64.678, in the County of Los Angeles, as the CHP Officer Andy Ornelas Memorial Highway. The measure would request the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to determine the cost for appropriate signs, which shall include the star of the California Highway Patrol, showing these special designations and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

EXISTING LAW: Assigns Caltrans the responsibility of operating and maintaining state highways. This includes the installation and maintenance of highway signs.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown, but the measure requests that Caltrans determine the cost of appropriate signage consistent with requirements for the state highway system, and only erect the appropriate signage upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the cost.

COMMENTS: Andy Ornelas of the California Highway Patrol's Antelope Valley Area was born in the City of Lancaster, California, to parents Art and Kellie Ornelas on September 8, 1993. Andy was raised in the City of Palmdale, California, where he attended Quartz Hill High School, graduating in 2011. Andy continued his education, receiving a degree in fire science at the University of Antelope Valley and attending the Paramedic Program at the UCLA Center for Prehospital Care. He began his professional career as an Emergency Room Technician (EMT) at Antelope Valley Hospital from 2011 through 2013, and continued his professional career as a paramedic and EMT with American Medical Response (AMR) from 2013 through 2016. Andy comes from a law enforcement family: his mother is a retired California Highway Patrol officer from the Antelope Valley station where Andy would later work; his father is a motorcycle officer with the Los Angeles Police Department; his brother is a California Highway Patrol officer in the Central Los Angeles Area office; and his uncle is a retired California Highway Patrol captain. On December 5, 2016, Andy entered the California Highway Patrol Academy and officially became a California Highway Patrol officer on June 16, 2017, and completed his extensive motor training to become a motor officer in April 2018.

In 2019, after dating for over 10 years, Andy married the love of his life and best friend, Taylor, and together Andy and Taylor filled their life with love for one another, family, and traveling. Andy was also an extremely devoted son and spent time with his family while dirt bike riding and going to the lake.

Officer Ornelas responded to many emergency incidents for individuals injured or otherwise in distress on or around California's highways; Andy lived the California Highway Patrol motto, "Safety, Service, and Security". Officer Ornelas not only provided the community with the highest level of safety, service, and security, he also took an active role in community events, including participating in the holiday parade showcasing his riding skills and handing out high fives to children of the Antelope Valley, regularly taking the time to allow children to sit on his motor and take photographs.

Officer Ornelas did not hesitate when putting himself in harm's way to provide needed emergency assistance to a person in distress and in need of immediate attention. Officer Ornelas, badge number 21685, crashed while on his way to help two people involved in a motor accident, sustained multiple injuries, and was transported to Antelope Valley Hospital, where he received around-the-clock care but unfortunately succumbed to his injuries on December 2, 2020. Andy is survived by his wife, Taylor; his father, Art; his mother, Kellie; his brother, Cody; and sister, Nikki.

In recognition of Officer Ornelas's great contributions and sacrifice in serving the California Highway Patrol and the citizens of California, it is fitting to designate a portion of State Highway Route 14 in the County of Los Angeles in his honor.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

California Association of Highway Patrolmen

Opposition

None on file

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